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ABSTRACT

To determine the trend of school tutoring programs in the states, a survey letter was sent to all 50 state superintendents of public instruction. Of the 48 replies received, 8 states indicated they have some type of statewide program, and 41 reported local tutoring programs. An analysis of the data led to several conclusions. There appears to be a trend toward tutoring at the state or local levels, though at both levels programs are very diverse, ranging from programs for juvenile offenders to those for Native Americans, to those for low achieving elementary students. Many tutoring programs focus on reading, including federally funded prorams such as Title I. Most states use adults as tutors, though peers or older students are also utilized. Several nationally recognized volunteer groups, such as the Laubach Literacy Program, are used at district or local levels. The authors conclude that tutoring programs are beneficial, especially to students who need extra individual attention, and are so diverse as to allow districts to choose programs to meet their unique needs. A summary of the responses from each state concerning its tutoring programs is included. (JM)

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TUTORING: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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Tutoring: A National Perspective

Tutoring, as we know it today, is unlike the original concept. Initially, the word "tutor" meant "to protect, guard and care for." Today, tutoring implies teaching a student on a one-to-one basis or may involve groups of two or more students. Most tutoring involves reading and emphasizes the skills needed to become proficient readers. A study by Blank and Solomon (1969) indicated that highly structured tutorial models help low-achievers make significant progress.[1] If the tutoring situation was not highly structured, the models were ineffective.

To determine the national trend of states toward the implementation of tutoring in schools, a letter of inquiry was sent to state superintendents of public instruction in the fifty United States.[2] Of the forty-eight replies received, eight states indicated they have some type of statewide program. Forty-one states reported that there are programs at the local level which sponsor, promote, endorse, or conduct tutoring. Four states indicated that the only tutoring program over which the state department of education has any supervisory authority is that offered to special education students through a Homebound Instruction Program.

A closer look at tutoring programs on the state level reveals a variation in the types of programs. Some programs operate during the summer months to assist kindergarten through sixth grade students whose deficiencies are minimal. Students in groups of twelve or less may proceed to the next grade level after receiving three hours of instruction, two in reading and one in mathematics, for six weeks. Some programs are concerned solely with junior high school students who read at third grade level or below. These students receive individual attention from a

teacher aide. Other programs concentrate on adults only or on primary grades utilizing teacher aides and student tutors.

Six states report that there are no school tutoring programs within local districts. Of these states, three indicate that, according to state statutes, students enrolled in public or private schools must be taught by individuals holding the proper license or certificate. However, there are no restrictions placed on parents employing private tutors or tutoring through private organizations. Many schools provide lists of substitute teachers as a source of reference to parents who request information on tutors. For the remaining three states, one offers as a resource a number of the Nationally Validated Tutoring Projects; a second reported tutoring provided solely for adults, while a third stated there was no information available.

A variety of programs, diversified in content and nature, are offered at local levels. These are usually coordinated by local counties or districts. The programs provide for tutoring kindergarten through twelfth grade and beyond. In most states, local autonomy prevails. School districts involved in Right to Read, Title I, Title VII and Education of the Disadvantaged are required to have a parent involvement component, thus several of these programs include a tutoring program.

Many local districts cooperate with Senior Citizens' Centers and use a foster grandparent program. Retired persons who are paid a nominal wage tutor students on a one-to-one or small group basis. They reinforce classroom work or help students catch up after an illness. Local districts also utilize volunteers in assisting adults with their reading problems. Several tutorial programs appear to be effective but are small in scope and

are developed to meet local needs adaptable to their environments. Some local districts train paraprofessionals in specific teaching techniques.

More evidence is becoming available on programs involving parent participation. Groups of parents are being trained to help their children in effective at-home instruction. An example of this is found in a program in Indiana called "Parent Participation: A Formula for Success" and a similar program in West Virginia entitled, "Read to Me."

The results of this survey disclosed the value placed upon tutoring within the United States. Forty-one states are highly supportive of tutoring at a local level even through they currently do not have statewide programs. These states, however, frequently offer assistance in establishing and organizing tutoring programs at a district or local level. Only three of the forty-eight states who responded reported that state statutes prohibit tutors who are not licensed or certified by the state. An analysis of the results produced data which led to the following conclusions.

1. There appears to be a trend in all of the United States toward tutoring at the state or local levels. Although two states did not respond to the survey, contacts to school districts within each state revealed the existence of local tutoring programs.

2. A variety of tutoring programs are in progress at the state level. For example, Hawaii has instituted a program to tutor children in the use of the English language. California has established a volunteer reading tutoring program which works with juvenile and young adult offenders. In New Hampshire a statewide Adult Tutorial Program offers adults a second chance to complete their elementary or secondary education.

3. A wide range of programs are available at the local level. In many instances the programs meet local needs or are unique to individual

states. In Albuquerque, New Mexico there is a program specifically designed for Native Americans. In the Fresno County (CA) Department of Education, the Migrant Department has tutoring programs in which thirty-two school districts participate.

4. The programs reported in the survey are flexible in order to satisfy whatever need arises in any school. Even within districts, not all schools provide tutoring or the same type of tutoring.

5. Because of the priority placed on reading within the past few years, special tutoring programs have been instituted. These include federally funded programs such as Title I, II, IVC, and VII and Right-to-Read programs. Special programs frequently include a tutoring component which involves parent or adult volunteers. Another special program is for the homebound student who requires tutoring outside of the classroom.

6. The majority of states use adults as tutors. School districts are realizing that adults who are not licensed teachers are resources which should be tapped. Adults from various backgrounds have the potential to improve and expand skills of school children. Parents, grandparents, senior citizens and other adults volunteer to work with students who are having difficulty learning within a classroom setting. In some school districts paraprofessionals and aides are trained for tutoring and are then paid to assist the classroom teacher. Additionally, retired teachers or certified teachers who are not currently employed, welcome the opportunity to tutor children who are in need of extra assistance.

7. Another resource which has not been overlooked by thirteen states is the use of peers within schools. Students who are excelling often tutor their classroom peers who are having difficulties. A variation

of peer tutoring is cross-age tutoring where students from upper grades work with younger students; for example, a fifth grade student may tutor a second grade child. The use of university or college students to tutor in local schools is also becoming prevalent.

8. Several nationally recognized groups or programs such as Volunteers in Service to America and the Laubach Literacy Program are used at district or local levels. These programs are used at the discretion of the local schools when a need arises.

9. Other types of programs include private tutors, private organizations, church or industrial affiliated programs limited to adults. This survey indicates that local school districts should adopt tutoring programs which fulfill their individual needs.

The results and conclusions of this study suggest several implications for state departments of education, school superintendents, principals and teachers.

1. Ten to fifteen percent of students in each classroom need additional help in order to succeed. Because teachers are not always able to provide individual attention, tutors could be used to supplement the instruction.

2. Some students require a highly structured personal learning environment to make significant progress. Tutoring can provide this environment.

3. Because of the variety of available tutoring programs, school districts have the opportunity to choose one or a combination of programs to help low achievers.

4. Dissenting students who view the teacher as autonomous in the classroom often respond positively to a tutor and perform more proficiently when taught on a one-to-one basis.

5. Many community volunteers have the potential to expand and offer

diverse knowledge to students who are low achievers in a conventional classroom.

6. The use of parents/adults as tutors helps to increase the bond between home and school.

7. Peer tutoring, when used, has dual benefits. The low achiever receives additional help while the tutor reinforces his/her proficiency by teaching the needed skill.

The following summary of replies represents the current trends of states. Some of the reported results are subject to change since local schools or districts are utilizing tutors to attempt to improve the quality of education within local school districts even though there is no statewide program in existence.

Alabama -- The Department of Education indicates that Alabama has no statewide program concerning tutoring at the present time. However, three independent school systems are implementing programs which involve parents and adults working with children.

Alaska -- Currently, Alaska has no tutoring programs at the state or local levels. As a resource, however, several Nationally Validated Tutoring Projects are offered.

Arizona -- In Arizona, several school districts have a parent involvement component including tutoring programs revolving around Right-to-Read, Title I, Education for the Disadvantaged, and Title II. Additionally, in a proposal for federal assistance under Title II, Arizona has included a training component for parents who want to help their children at home or to serve in school-supported tutoring programs.

Arkansas -- Although there is no statewide volunteer program in Arkansas, volunteer programs are conducted at district levels.

California -- A volunteer reading tutoring program for the California Youth Authority is coordinated at the state level in California. This Reading Academy Program deals with juvenile and young adult offenders who read below a sixth grade level. At the county, district, school and community level, projects are at the discretion of local educators and community groups. The projects provide schools with guidelines and administrative structures (descriptive materials, forms, etc.) to recruit and use tutors.

Colorado -- The State Department of Education in Denver does not compile any information concerning the variety of tutoring programs currently in existence or proposed for Colorado. These programs are the responsibility of individual school districts and local baords of education.

Connecticut -- In Connecticut, there are no tutoring programs under the direct control of the State Department of Education. Many programs, determined locally, exist under Title I in individual schools. Some work in special education involves tutoring as a local option. Connecticut is a state in which local planning and implementing tends to predominate. There is a branch of Volunteers in Service to America, but the State Department has no direct connection with the group.

Delaware -- The Right-to-Read Program in Delaware trains tutors to teach adults in the community and students in schools. The State Reading Specialist organizes programs in local districts when requested. The Laubach Literacy Program and the National Reading Center materials are used.

Florida -- The State of Florida employs a coordinator for school volunteer programs. Florida also publishes a state directory for volunteer

programs. Tutoring is an essential component of the Florida School Volunteer Program. The county-based tutorial programs are mandated and funded by the State. All other programs are the responsibility of the individual schools and are designed for their specific needs.

Georgia -- The State Department of Education indicates that at the present time there is no information available regarding school tutorial programs in Georgia.

Hawaii -- The Hawaii State Department of Education utilizes several types of tutoring approaches. The most extensive use of tutoring is in the Title I Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Tutors, who are certified teachers, are hired to provide direct instructional services to students with reading problems. In the Hawaii English Program, Elementary, peer-tutoring is an integral part of the instructional program. Approximately forty-eight per cent of the elementary classrooms use the English Program. Other types of tutoring approaches are used, encouraged and implemented at the discretion of individual schools.

Idaho -- Idaho has no formal school tutoring program except as it relates to special education dealing with homebound students. Local districts are free to set up individual programs for tutoring.

Illinois -- The Illinois Right-to-Read Program annually promotes and sponsors training programs in the Literacy Volunteers of America program which prepares adult tutors. The Right-to-Read Program also distributes materials on the Right-to-Read In-School Tutoring Model. While these are the two major tutoring programs promoted by the Illinois State Board of Education, many school districts in Illinois have designed tutoring programs to meet their individual needs.

Indiana -- The State of Indiana utilizes several forms of tutoring throughout the state. These include small projects sponsored by individual corporations and a Title IV-C grant. The Division of Reading Effectiveness at the state level has a program called "Parent Participation· A Formula for Success" which also has a tutorial component.

Iowa -- In Iowa there is no formal or prescribed procedure at either the local or state level in regard to obtaining the services of a tutor. Under Iowa statute, any student enrolled in a public school or state approved private school has to be taught by an individual possessing the proper license to teach in the state. There are no provisions for "tutors" in Iowa's certification procedures. Any student of compulsory school age, regardless of whether the program of instruction is state approved, must be taught by a certified individual.

Kansas -- The Kansas State Department of Education does not sponsor or promote tutoring at the state level. However, several school districts are actively involved in tutoring at a local level.

Kentucky -- Tutoring programs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky are not promoted or sponsored at the state level. They are conducted in individual schools and/or districts and are diversified in content and nature.

Louisiana -- The Department of Education in Louisiana employs a State Literacy Coordinator and publishes a Louisiana Literary Directory. No information was given concerning tutors at a district or local level.

Maine -- The State of Maine has a private non-profit volunteer tutoring program called the Literacy Volunteers of Maine. The statewide adult

basic education effort which utilizes local, state and federal monies works closely with Literacy Volunteers on statewide and local bases.

Maryland -- The Maryland State Department of Education has a Specialist in Volunteer Programs who arranges for the participation of volunteers in instructional and non-instructional programs. Each of the twenty-four Local Education Agencies in Maryland has appointed a volunteer coordinator who is responsible for the organization of school volunteer programs. Some agencies provide tutor training to volunteers in a system-wide effort while others permit training in each school.

Massachusetts -- The Department of Education in Massachusetts does not control tutoring practices. These responsiblities are solely in the hands of the local education agency.

Michigan -- At the present time, the State Department of Education in Michigan does not have a tutorial program nor does it endorse existing programs. Tutorial services are offered through licensed teachers or private organizations.

Minnesota -- The Minnesota Department of Education does not have a statewide volunteer tutoring program. However, the Reading Unit, a department component, works cooperatively with the Minnesota Literacy Council which provides one-to-one tutoring to adult non-readers. There are numerous volunteer reading programs conducted at the district levels.

Missouri -- The only tutoring program over which the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has any supervisory authority is that offered to special education students through the Homebound Instruction Program. Although the State of Missouri has developed

criteria for eligibility for state assistance, they have not developed any resource materials to be utilized by the tutors. The staff of the Board of Education has developed a short pamphlet entitled, "25 Ways Parents Can Help With Reading," which has been circulated statewide.

Nebraska -- There are several formal tutoring programs in the State of Nebraska which operate at the local level. Some of these specialize in tutoring for Special Education, Title I, the Indian Program, Junior High School and Elementary levels.

Nevada -- Although there is no statewide tutorial program in Nevada, there are several diversified programs at district levels involving cross-age tutorial programs and one-to-one tutoring by sixth graders assisting kindergarten students.

New Hampshire -- At the state level, New Hampshire provides an Adult Tutorial Program in Adult Basic Education. No indication of tutoring at the district level or individual schools was given.

New Jersey -- No specific position on tutoring has been proposed by the New Jersey State Department of Education other than to encourage local districts to utilize tutors to increase students' proficiencies. Although some teacher associations have opposed the use of tutors, some districts have had long histories of successful volunteer tutoring programs. The State Office Volunteer Services, Department of Community Affairs and the Bureau of Basic Skills, Department of Education have tried to coordinate efforts to promote interest and training for tutors.

New Mexico -- The Department of Education indicated that the State of New Mexico does not have any extensive school tutoring programs. Individual

schools and local school districts have the option to establish any tutoring programs that will meet specific needs of the students.

New York -- The State Education Department in Albany has no organized tutoring program which it recommends or sponsors. There are several parent and student volunteer tutoring programs in districts and individual schools.

North Carolina -- The Department of Public Instruction has a tutoring component entitled, "Volunteer Programs in Reading." Since 1975, the Primary Reading Program has used volunteers. Initially, this statewide program was small but additional classes have been added each year. As the program grew, the number of volunteers increased. The volunteer program is coordinated at the local level by reading coordinators, principals, and/or interested citizens. Before entering the program, volunteers are trained by personnel of local school systems assisted by the State's Regional Reading Consultants.

North Dakota -- North Dakota does not have a statewide tutoring program. However, the state department has conducted training sessions for various groups. Schools and communities have become involved in tutoring at local levels.

Ohio -- Although there is no compilation of data, there are many different tutoring programs in Ohio. The Ohio Department of Education contains a Special Projects Section, Division of Elementary and Secondary Schools, and has coordinated a Volunteer/Community Education Conference in Columbus.

Oklahoma -- At the present time, there are several school districts in Oklahoma that have tutoring programs. These programs, operated by

local school districts, do not report to the state concerning their tutoring programs.

Oregon -- Oregon does not have a statewide volunteer tutoring program. However, several local districts use volunteers extensively in their reading program.

Pennsylvania -- Currently, there are two programs in Pennsylvania which are funded through the Department of Education. They are the "Parent Partner Program" in the Philadelphia School District and "Dial a Teacher" in the Harrisburg School District. Individual school districts are responsible for sponsoring tutorial programs for their schools.

Rhode Island -- A volunteer program involving tutoring entitled "Volunteers in Education Training for Teachers (VETT), is privately funded through the Rhode Island Department of Education, National Education Association Rhode Island, and Volunteers in Rhode Island Schools, Inc. Corsortium. Rhode Island has a network of autonomous school volunteer programs which receive support services from Volunteers in Rhode Island Schools, a statewide non-profit corporation which contracts with the Rhode Island Department of Education to coordinate volunteer activities.

South Carolina -- The Department of Education in Columbia indicates that there are no tutoring programs in operation in South Carolina. There are indications that some parents have their children privately tutored.

South Dakota -- South Dakota does not have a statewide tutoring program but several district programs are in operation throughout the state.

Tennessee -- The State of Tennessee does not have a statewide program. Local schools provide tutoring within their school districts.

Texas -- Although there are many schools in the state using volunteers to assist in instruction, there is no statewide plan for the implementation of the volunteers. Each school, working with local supervisors, determines the training, the tasks and the rules and regulations observed by school volunteers. Volunteer coordinators in large school districts are active in the national volunteers organization and profit by recommendations from that source.

Utah -- While there is no statewide tutoring program in Utah, there are several programs which are considered exemplary in the State. One program, "Programmed Tutorial Reading," has been nationally validated and is used in areas throughout the United States. A second program is the "Structured Tutorial Reading Program," by the Brigham Young University Press. A third program utilizes parent volunteers. Small programs, developed for local needs, are also in existence.

Vermont -- The State of Vermont does not have a statewide volunteer tutoring program. Local programs within school districts and a nationally recognized tutor program (unnamed) at the adult level are used.

Virginia -- Although there is no statewide program, the Commonwealth of Virginia indicates that tutoring programs take place at local levels. Many districts use student team learning programs.

Washington -- There is no statewide program in the State of Washington. However, approximately one-third of the school districts use a nationally validated program (unnamed) which is aimed at improving reading skills through the utilization of volunteer tutors.

West Virginia -- The State of West Virginia does not have a statewide tutoring program. Within local districts, both paid and volunteer tutors are used to improve skills of students.

Wisconsin -- Tutoring programs exist in local school districts in the State of Wisconsin. Many tutoring programs are funded through federal money. The State Department of Education does not collect conclusive data on the numbers of tutoring programs within the state.

Wyoming -- The tutoring programs used in Wyoming have been implemented and developed to satisfy local area needs. The programs train tutors to work with children and adults.

Footnotes*

1. Blank, M. and Solomon, F., "How Shall the Disadvantaged be Taught?" Child Development, 1969, 40, 47-61.
2. Smith, Patricia and Saltz, Martin, "School Tutoring Programs," Reading Center, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia, Report 011880 PS/MS, May 1981.

* References are identical to footnotes. No additional references.